The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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CONTENTS OF NO. 3.

WHITE EVERLASTING FLOWERS 25
NOT AS I WILL. II. 26
THE STILL HOUR 28
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB 30
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL 31
NATURAL HISTORY: WILD FLOWERS 34
AMUSEMENT COLUMN 35
THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE 36
IMPORTANT NOTICES 36

WHITE EVERLASTING FLOWERS.

That morning on the mountain-top!
Could the day's chariot-wheel but stop,
And leave us in this trance of light
Upon our autumn-crimsoned height,—
Summit of lifted solitudes,
Where but the lifted breeze intrudes,
With one blue river glimpsed in sheen
Along the valley's perfect green;
With lakes that open limpid eyes
Unto the old heaven's new surprise;
And over all a purple range
Of hills that glow and pale and change
To pearl and turquoise, rose and snow,
As cloud processions past them go
On unknown errands of the air.

"Yes: earth to-day in heaven hath share,"
We told each other in our thought,
Though in that high hush lips moved not.
If that were only Bearcamp stream
That lit the vale with sinuous gleam;
If mountains that in opal shone
By common rustic names were known,—
Old Israel, Hunchback, and the rest.
In floods of beauty they lay blest,
And bathed in the same bliss were we
On the pine crest of Ossipee.

"Earth is not mere hard earth," we said,
"A place of toil for daily bread,
A clod to cover us at last,
When struggle and defeat are past;
But heaven is hid therein alway,
The gem's clear essence in dull clay,
And by celestial visionings
Alone we read the truth of things.
Since life puts off her rough disguise
As into purer air we rise,
Why should we leave our hard-won peak,
The lowland commonplace to seek?
Here with transfiguring rapture thrilled,
Here let us tabernacles build!"

What was it stopped our musing talk?
White blossoms scattered on a rock,
White everlasting flowers that grow
Where bleakest north winds beat and blow,—
New England's amaranth. Some tired hand
Had dropped them, or in visions grand
As ours had let them slip, forgot,
The text of our bewildered thought
Left to illumine and explain,—
Pathetic flowers that might have lain
Days, months, in their torn raiment white,
Undying children of the light,
By whoso sought them scorned, thrown by,
Rapt with these mountain splendors high.

Climb for the white flower of thy dream,
O pilgrim! let the vision gleam
As hope and possibility,
Down the low level that must be
Thy usual path; but do not stay,
Enamoured of supernal day,
While thy benighted comrades grope
In shadows on the dangerous slope!
Its light in eye and heart shall be
A signal betwixt them and thee
Of joy to wait for and desire,
While faith can glow or souls aspire.

Yet hold fast something to recall
The glory that envelopes all
The meanest dust that round us lies,—
Some glimpse of near eternities,—
Though but one everlasting flower,
Memory of one immortal hour,
For waif more saddening none may find
Than amaranth plucked and left behind.

—*Lucy Larcom.*

NOT AS I WILL.

II.

Here, friends, indulge me in repeating in part what I have written elsewhere, the subject is so important. What could be more unforeseen, to all appearance more accidental, than what occurred at Capernaum, in the synagogue, when Jesus first assumed the office of a public teacher? His whole manner on that occasion was marked by such an air of authority, born of his profound conviction of the truth to which he gave utterance, that all present were struck by it. They were astonished at his teaching. His word was with power. The like of it they had never witnessed in any of the established teachers. Moved, as all were, they were suddenly startled by a voice breaking the awed silence of the place, and hailing Jesus as the holy one of God. All eyes were suddenly turned to the man from whom the cry had come. There is nothing to authorize the idea that the man was insane. He did but give utterance to the feeling that pervaded the whole assembly. He was doubtless a person of sensitive temperament, subject to attacks of nervous weakness, liable to be brought on by an unusual exciting cause, and in which he lost control of himself. Hence came the outcry.

As all forms of disease were then and there ascribed to demoniacal agency, to the people present the voice of the man that had startled them was the voice of a spirit, bearing witness to Jesus. Instinctively, with no thought, apparently, but of silencing the man, Jesus commanded the spirit to depart. Whereupon, being thus spoken to by the person whom he looked upon with such reverence, and having the eyes of the whole assembly fixed upon him, the man fell down in a fit, from which, however, he shortly recovered, calm and self-possessed. As to all present the voice of the man was the voice of a spirit, so the convulsion into which he was thrown was the struggle of the demon against the power of Jesus. The report of this incident instantly flew far and wide. It penetrated to the house of Peter, whither Jesus went from the synagogue, and where the mother of Peter's wife lay ill. She caught the universal excitement, so that, when Jesus entered the chamber where she lay, and took her by the hand, she rose to her feet, her strength returned, and she was able to take part in the offices of hospitality. Here was new food for popular wonder. It was the Sabbath. What could be more natural than that, as we read, at sunset, when the Sabbath ended, the house where Jesus was should be besieged by a great crowd? "The whole city," it is related, appeared to be there, among them many persons afflicted by various diseases coming to be healed. With the exaggeration natural to the hour, it is said that Jesus healed them all. It may readily be supposed that some in the crowd, of a sensitive temperament, and suffering from nervous affections, were more or less relieved by the bare sight of him, gazed at, as he was, by all eyes dilated by awe-struck wonder.

Among them all there was no one, I conceive, who was so deeply moved by this sudden and unlooked-for state of things as he who was the cause of it all. It took him by surprise, as did the faith of the Roman centurion shortly after. So it may be inferred from its being stated that he could not sleep the night following that eventful Sabbath. The next morning, "long before day," he left his bed, and went away to a secluded spot, to seek light and guidance in view of the unexpected turn that things had taken. The work which had his whole heart, and for which he had come forth before the world, was purely spiritual; and here were all the people insisting upon his being a healer of bodily diseases. That was all they saw in him. That was not what he designed to be. He had a far higher aim. What he had said in the synagogue seemed to him all forgotten, lost, obliterated in the excitement caused by what happened there and in the house of Peter. It was to the diseases of the soul that he aimed to minister, to the binding up of the broken-hearted, to the deliverance of the captives of sin, to the restoring of sight to the spiritually blind. When his friends went in search of him and found him, and told him that every one was inquiring for him, he refused to return to the scene of those exciting incidents, declaring that he must go elsewhere and announce the kingdom of heaven.

My purpose in dwelling thus particularly on this passage of the immortal story is in

order to show that what have been regarded as miracles in the sense of violations of the laws of nature were no miracles at all, but instances—extraordinary, indeed, but only instances, as Jesus subsequently declared all the marvels that he wrought to be—of the power of faith, of the influence of mind over the flesh.

Were no illustration of this natural law reported in the Gospels, except such as were of like character with those attending the first appearance of Jesus in public, the sceptically inclined, I imagine, might find but little difficulty in admitting them to be not incredible. But far more extraordinary things are related, such as the instantaneous restoration of sight to the blind, and of the recently dead to life. In these cases, also, Jesus claimed no power peculiar to himself. He ascribed them all to faith.

The whole subject, therefore, of miracles, which has caused infinite embarrassment, and thrown over the New Testament history an air of absolute incredulity, may be dismissed once for all as having nothing to do with it. Hume's celebrated argument against miracles may go unnoticed for any bearing it has upon the credibility of the Gospels. In the interest of the primitive history of Christianity, we have no concern with any events out of the divine order of the world.

The only question with which we have to do toward establishing the truth of that history is this: Is faith equal to the working of such extraordinary things as are ascribed to it in the Gospels?

I am persuaded that nothing has wrought so effectually to hide from us the real character of the New Testament story, and consequently the person of him of whom it tells us, as the opinion long and widely held without question, taken for granted by all denominations of Christians; namely this, that one sent by God must prove his divine mission by working miracles,—that is, by suspending the laws of nature. To my mind, nothing has at last become plainer than that directly the opposite is the truth. Not by departing from the laws of nature, the ways of God, but by revealing them and conforming to them in all things, from the greatest to the least, is a man clothed with the highest possible authority.

I cannot enter at any length into this inquiry within the limits of a discourse which I am endeavoring not to make long.

I remark, in passing, that to reject any fact or event as incredible, solely because we cannot conceive how it can be, is to incur the irrepressible scorn of the great apostle: "How are the dead raised?" does any man ask? "Fool!"

> "Custom that lies upon us with a weight
> Heavy as frost and deep almost as life,"

blinds us to the inscrutable marvels in the midst of which we have our being. What mysterious apparitions are the flowers and the trees! Whence has the tall oak that I see from my window in the country got its solid, storm-defying trunk? The oak sprang from an acorn. Was it all contained in that small seed which perished long ago? It has all come, men of science tell us, from the sun. What! that heavy bulk all made out of sunbeams? Truly, could we really see with our eyes, we should find nothing more incredible in calling back the dead to life by a faith so powerful as that of Jesus than the wonders all around us.

We know not what life is. We know not what we call death is, nor what hidden sympathies there may be, for a while, between the living and those who have just dropped into that deep slumber.

It suffices, friends, for my own belief in those, the greatest of the wonders related to have been wrought by Jesus, that, so far from jarring with my sense of the dignity of his person, as they certainly would were they the fictions of a barbarous age, they deepen my sense of his personal greatness. Moved only by compassion, at once thoroughly human and a divine inspiration, he did nothing, I repeat, for effect. The most wonderful things were done by him as if they were the commonest offices of humanity. Never does he appear greater to me than at the bier of the widow's son, at the bedside of the young daughter of Jairus, and at the grave of his friend Lazarus. He muttered no adjurations, he besought the aid of no higher power, but awoke the dead from the deep slumber just as he would have awakened the living from the lighter slumber of the night, in full faith that the power of which he was conscious in himself was identically the Supreme Power working in him, as it works in all that is.

The faith that animated the people around him, and that wrought so powerfully on the sick and the infirm, like his faith, was no illusion, but faith pure and genuine. They did not read aright their own consciousness. They did not analyze it. They were not aware of what it was in him that moved them so greatly. They thought only of the healing power which they believed dwelt in him, when, in reality, it was in themselves. In truth, it was the sincerity, the single eye filling his whole being with light, that beamed from his countenance, that rung in his voice, that illumined his whole person like an aureole,—this, this it was to their inmost hearts, the very Spirit of Truth, of God. It was the personal magnetism,—to use a word common nowadays, for want of a better,—which was nothing that he had acquired, but which belonged to him, being the man Heaven had made him, as inseparable from him as light from the sun, going forth from him as involuntarily as it was unconsciously felt by the people about him. Accordingly, without their being aware of it, in putting faith in him, the people were having faith in Almighty God.

Finally, we are living in times when the air is close and suffocating with materialistic theories and speculations. Science, emboldened by her splendid triumphs, announces that the Supreme Power cannot be traced beyond monads and molecules whose sole attribute of Deity is that they are invisible. Never was a knowledge of the person of Jesus, being, as it is, a revelation of a Sovereign Spirit of wisdom and love,—never was it of deeper interest than at this hour. Not for any peculiarity of his metaphysical nature, but for his perfected humanity,—because in all respects entirely human, and consequently in the closest affinity, nearest of kin, to the universal heart of the world, —for this reason he is and will be forever a power, inspiring and blessing mankind. It is by the crucifix, the symbol of human weakness and suffering, and by the Madonna and the Infant Jesus, symbols of the tenderest human love,—it is by these human symbols, beyond all its hierarchies and ceremonials, which appeal only to the imagination, that the grandest and most venerable of our churches has comforted and softened, and is still comforting and softening, thousands of human hearts.

It cannot be otherwise. It is written in the very nature of things that, so far from becoming outgrown and obsolete, as some persuade us he is already, Christ is to increase in power by the simple force of his personal character. At present, to most he is hardly anything more than a dimly defined phantom. But, as he is more distinctly seen, he will inspire an ever-deepening veneration, quickening the generous sympathies and active powers of our nature; and thus the sacred sentiment of religion, the sense of the life of God in the soul of man, will become the life-blood of the world.

—*William Henry Furness.*

THE STILL HOUR.

THY WILL BE DONE.

We see not, know not: all our way
Is night,—with Thee alone is day.
From out the torrent's troubled drift,
Above the storm our prayers we lift,
Thy will be done!

The flesh may fail, the heart may faint;
But who are we to make complaint,
Or dare to plead, in times like these,
The weakness of our love of ease?
Thy will be done!

We take with solemn thankfulness
Our burden up, nor ask it less,
And count it joy that even we
May suffer, serve, or wait for thee,
Whose will be done!

Though dim as yet in tint and line,
We trace thy picture's wise design,
And thank thee that our age supplies
Its dark relief of sacrifice.
Thy will be done!

And if, in our unworthiness,
Thy sacrificial wine we press;
If from thy ordeal's heated bars
Our feet are seamed with crimson scars,
Thy will be done!

If, for the age to come, this hour
Of trial hath vicarious power,
And, blest by thee, our present pain
Be Liberty's eternal gain,
Thy will be done.

Strike, thou the Master, we thy keys,
The anthem of the destinies!
The minor of thy loftier strain,
Our hearts shall breathe the old refrain,
Thy will be done!

—*John G. Whittier.*

SPECIAL PROVIDENCE.

Many persons find it hard to believe in any special Providence. They say: "God governs the world by laws, and he never interferes with their working. When we obey the natural laws, we are rewarded: when we disobey them, we are punished. How can I believe that God will alter the working of his laws to meet the needs, the dangers, the exigencies of any individual?" No, we need not believe this, and yet we may have faith in a Father who watches over his children. Often what seem to be the greatest of calamities turn out to be blessings.

It seemed a dreadful thing for the Pilgrim Fathers to be driven by oppression from their pleasant homes in old England to come to these wild shores, with a mysterious wilderness on one side, full of alarms, and a stormy sea on the other. But now we see the great opportunity which was given them to lay deep the foundations of a nation. Was it accident that brought them here? Was it blind law that put a people in New England who believed at once in order and liberty, in freedom and union, in religion and education? The roots of this mighty nation still draw nutriment from that sad and solemn beginning,—foreordained before the foundation of the world.

The old man sits before his door beneath the great elm on a summer's afternoon, and recalls his past life. He sees how mercifully he has been led from the beginning; how his wild youth was restrained, his impetuous passions tempered by events and circumstances, in which he now sees everywhere a protecting hand. He looks back on trials and disasters which he found it hard to bear, to disappointments which at the time appeared to be intolerable. Now the setting sun of his life parts the clouds through which it has travelled during the day, and throws a radiance of glory, beauty, and blessing on the long succession of his years. Strength has come to him through this discipline. He has learned to be patient, to be generous, to be self-forgetting. He feels himself more and more in the presence of a Heavenly Father, whose hand has led him through these varied scenes. What once looked like the work of an evil destiny he now finds to be the leading of a tender Providence.

We often think, before experience has taught us better, that prayer is only contemplation, meditation; that the only answer to prayer is the reaction of our own thoughts,—that it is not communion, but self-communion. We say that God will not change his laws in answer to prayer, and, having said that, we think the question settled. Yes. He does not change his laws; but may it not be one of his laws that those who ask him sincerely and earnestly for inward peace, light, strength, pardon, comfort, shall receive it? Far down in the mysterious depths of the soul, below any distinct consciousness, is the region where we are in communion with God. We hear no sound,—there is no tempest, no earthquake, no fire,—but a voice so low and sweet and still that we only know the peace that comes, the strength that is given, the comfort of the Holy Spirit shed abroad in our hearts, and we say, "I *was* weak: I *am* strong."

The little child, in its childish grief, runs to its father and mother that it may be folded in their arms. That is enough. We go to our Heavenly Father, and that is enough. Is an earthly father nearer than he? Is any mortal tenderness so divinely tender as his? Shall we allow any little theories of law and causation to come between us and that great source of peace? As the years roll on, our trust in the Heavenly Father continually increases, and our faith in prayer grows till it becomes like that of Jesus, unwavering and sure. And so we can say:—

"That more and more a Providence
Of love is understood,
Making the springs of time and sense
Sweet with eternal good.

"That care and trial seem at last,
In memory's sunset air,
Like mountain ranges overpast
In purple distance fair.

"That all the jarring notes of life
Are blended in a psalm,
And all the angles of its strife
Slow rounded into calm."

—*James Freeman Clarke.*

Every humble soul that sees the Father, and lives in that sweet vision, becomes a priest to other souls. A sacramental power goes from the voice, the touch, the look of one who himself loves God.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.*]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.—Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated, all* books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.?

The following books are offered by the Hawes Branch. Address Miss D. G. Putnam, 81 K Street, South Boston, Mass.: Channing's Works (six volumes); Eaton's "Arithmetic"; Kerr's "Grammar"; "Poems," A. A. Procter; "We Two"; "Derrick Vaughan"; "Madame Lucas"; "Three Miss Kings"; "Boy of Mount Rhigi"; "Rollo in Holland"; "Cyril Ashley"; *Perry Picture Magazine*, 1900, 1901, 1902; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1900.

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. Here I come again, thanking each and every one who has remembered me so kindly the past few years, and hoping to have a continuance of the same. I ask you to send suitable reading to my friend, Mrs. Loula Tatum. She has a little girl eight years old, and lives with her aged father who is seventy-four. She lives ten miles from the railroad, and has no library or high school near her: lives two miles from church. Mrs. Tatum is very kind hearted, and sympathizes with the afflicted, and will of course pass her reading on to others. Her address is Mrs. Loula Tatum, Buffalo Ridge, Patrick County, Virginia. (Miss) Lina Thomas, Charity, Patrick County, Virginia.

2. I wish to express my thanks for the reading matter I have received since my name was sent to you. I have not received anything for several months except the *Cheerful Letter*, which I am always very glad to read. My address has changed from Macomb, Illinois, to New Windsor, Illinois. I now live in the country almost among strangers. I have two little boys, aged eight and ten years. With kind wishes to all the Cheerful Letter friends, Mrs. Rena Gamage, New Windsor, Illinois.

3. I thank those who have sent me reading matter in the past, as it was greatly appreciated, and I would accept it as a great favor if some one would send me the *Ladies' Home Journal;* "Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow,"

by Jerome K. Jerome; or any reading matter. (Miss) Clara Greer.

4. Mrs. Mary V. Doss, Rella, North Carolina, will be glad to receive a United States history for her twelve-year-old boy.

5. Mrs. B. F. Thompson, Sayre, Oklahoma, formerly of Texas, will be glad of any magazines.

6. Miss M. B. Landis, Oxford, North Carolina, asks for "Amy Herbert" and "The Trial," the sequel to "Daisy Chain."

7. Mrs. E. A. Clark, Levant, Maine, is anxious for the "Normal Instructor."

8. Mrs. A. E. Locke, Athens, Maine, will be glad of any reading.

9. Mrs. Nannie Alley, Moores Mill, Virginia, asks for reading for her husband, who is an invalid, and a little boy ten years of age.

10. Mrs. H. B. Chadd, 546 South Franklin Street, Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania, asks for "Pilgrim's Progress."

11. Mrs. Etta Moore, Norwood, North Carolina, a widow with one child, entirely dependent upon her daily labor for support, and living with her father who has been nearly blind the last twenty years, and not able to contribute to her support, will appreciate any reading sent her.

12. Mrs. Genevra Hall, Uwahrie, North Carolina, a young widow, will be pleased to receive any reading.

13. Mrs. Lyda Tyson, Eggtown, North Carolina, will be glad of reading.

14 Mrs. M. A. Ellar, Blackstone, North Carolina, asks for reading for herself and two boys, eleven and seven years of age.

15. *Dear Cheerful Letter Friends*,—I wish to thank you for your kind interest in me, and for the books and papers you have sent to my little grand-daughter. Away out here in Washington there is little to interest one, aside from the beautiful scenery. We will soon be settled on our homestead, and then we will be about twenty miles from town and fourteen from post-office,—no schools or churches in reach. There will be three of us, my daughter, grand-daughter of ten, and myself; and we shall live alone, in a thinly settled portion of the country. The outlook is not encouraging, as a severe drouth is cutting the crops short here. I shall be very grateful for any of the following books or for anything that will help to brighten our tiny home away out here among the hills: "Ben-Hur," "Alice of Old Vincennes," "The Choir Invisible." We are not strong, and shall have many cares; and good reading will be appreciated more than I can tell. My address is no longer Southside, but Leahy, Douglas County, Washington. (Mrs.) A. C. Earl.

16. Miss Lizzie M. Bailey, Brooks, Maine, would like a copy of the "Life of Peter Cartwright," a Methodist preacher.

17. I came across a copy of the *Cheerful Letter* to-day, and am delighted with it. My life is very lonely, as my husband and I live all alone in the back woods. We have no children. I am a member of the church, and am trying to live a Christian life. Won't you please send me some reading matter? I am very fond of reading, but am not able to buy any books. I shall be glad of a dictionary, as many religious books as you can send. (My minister's address and name is Rev. J. H. Brindle, Ansonville, North Carolina.) Mrs. Tempie B. Tyson, Ansonville, North Carolina.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

(Juno was a young colored woman who undertook to have a class of children who did not go to any Sunday-school. She consulted Mary Osborne, who was one of the teachers in the regular Sunday-school, in regard to arranging her class.)

"And is there anything else I can do for you?" asked Mary.

"I don't know that there is," replied Juno, "unless you could give me some advice about managing my scholars and teaching them."

Mary paused a moment, as if hesitating what advice to give. Then she said:—

"No, Juno: I think you will know how to manage your class better than I can tell you. I don't believe that I can give you any advice that will help you, except in one thing,

and that is, don't be disheartened and discouraged when the dark hour comes. The dark hours will come, you may depend. In all our undertakings, after the novelty and the interest of the first setting-out has passed away, there is almost sure to come a time of discouragement and despondency, when we almost wish we had not begun. That I call the dark hour. I have had my dark hour many times. You must expect to have yours. But, when it comes, you must not be discouraged. You must cheer up, and press on. I am very sure you will succeed in the end."

"If I could only be sure of that," said Juno, "I don't think I should mind the dark hour much."

"You may be sure of it," said Mary. "I feel very sure of it. The same spirit which has put it into your heart to gather this class will guide you in teaching it; and it will all come out right in the end. So don't be troubled when you come to the dark hour."

Juno was afraid that the children would not all come to school unless she went for them herself. Some of them, she thought, would forget all about the school unless there was something to remind them of it. Others might be bashful about coming or otherwise afraid. So she determined to call for them all, and take them with her.

Her plan succeeded pretty well, for she obtained by this means five of her promised scholars. She obtained two, Tommy and another boy, without any difficulty. The next two, when they saw her coming, ran away, and hid. They did not wish to go to the school at all, though they had promised to do so; and so, when they saw the teacher coming, they made their escape. One of them ran off down a green lane, and would not stop, although Juno called to him in a very kind voice. The name of this boy was Oliver.

The other boy that she could not get was named Dick. He, when he saw Juno coming, with Tommy and Pompling, one on each side of her, and perceived that they were coming to take him to school, ran into the barn.

The other two boys, when they saw Dick running off in this way, became much excited, and began to pull Juno along in that direction, Tommy saying eagerly:—

"He's gone to hide! Come, quick, Juno, and we'll find him! He can't hide anywhere possibly in the barn but what we can find him!"

So Juno went with the boys into the barn, and there, after looking about for some time, Pompling called out to Dick to say "Coop!"

"Give us a fair chance," said he, "and sing out 'Coop!'"

In fact the boys seemed to consider the affair a regular game of "hide and seek." Juno herself began to think it was assuming rather too much of that character to be a suitable employment for Sunday, and concluded to give up the search. So she led Tommy and Pompling away.

Juno decided to give up Oliver and Dick, and to go to her school with only such of the rest as she could find. One or two of the others were missing also. They had forgotten all about the school, and had gone away. To make up for these losses, however, Juno found two more children on the way, whom she persuaded to accompany her. So that, finally, when she reached her little room, she had five scholars with her, three boys and two girls.

Juno conducted her children up the stairs to her little school-room. They made a good deal of noise in going up, and, when about half-way up, two of the boys began to hurry forward to see which could get to the top first, struggling together by the way, each one attempting to keep the other back in order that he might get before him. Juno gently reproved them; but they did not pay much heed to her admonitions, and all crowded forward together to enter the school-room, except one girl, who seemed more timid than the rest. She lingered behind them, and kept close by the side of Juno.

"Now, children," said Juno, "you must take off your caps, and sit down on the benches till I begin the school."

At receiving this command the children made a rush for the benches. "Where shall we put our caps?" said Tommy, in a sturdy sort of voice.

At the same moment Pompling, without waiting for an answer to this question, pulled off his cap and threw it across the room into a corner.

The other boys followed his example, and immediately the room was full, as it were, of flying caps, until they all came together in the corner.

"Ah, children!" said Juno, remonstrating. "But never mind now. Let them lie there. I'll drive some nails up before next Sunday."

Juno then attempted to begin the services of the school. The first thing was to read a few verses in the Bible, and also a short prayer. The children sat tolerably still, on the whole, during this performance, though several of them were quite restless; and two of them at one time began crowding against each other in the middle of one of the benches, and made so much difficulty that Juno was obliged to stop until she could remove one of them to another seat.

Juno's plan in teaching the children to read was to begin with words instead of letters.

"Now, children," said Juno, "first, I am going to teach you how to read *cat*."

So saying, Juno wrote the word "cat," in large letters on the board.

"There it is," said Juno. "That is *cat*. Look at it well, so that you will know it when I make it again. See! There is a kind of a round letter at the beginning, and a tall letter, with a cross mark over it, at the end. Remember, when you see such a writing as that, that it means *cat*. It is a kind of a picture of a cat in writing."

"I don't think it looks a bit like a cat," said Tommy, speaking in a tone expressive of great contempt.

"That is true," said Juno. "It does not look like a cat at all, and I was wrong in saying that it was a *picture* of a cat. It rather stands instead of a picture, because it is easier to make. I will make you a picture of a cat."

So Juno drew a rude outline of an animal, so rude, in fact, that it might have stood as well for a dog or a pig or any other small animal as for a cat. Still it answered the purpose very well.

"Now," said Juno, pointing to the drawing, "what is that?"

"A cat," said the children, all together.

"And now, what is this?" she added, pointing to the word "cat," which she had written.

"A cat," they all shouted, just as before.

"Not exactly *a* cat," said Juno, "but only *cat*. The picture you might call *a* cat, but the writing is only *cat*. If I wanted you to read it *a* cat, I must write the letter *a* before it."'

So saying Juno wrote the letter *a* before the word "cat," and then added:—

"There! now you can read the writing just as you do the picture."

Then Juno pointed to the words written, and asked the children to read them. Some did not answer. Rosalie said, "A cat." Pompling said, "A pussy," on hearing which, almost all the children thinking, perhaps, that this reading afforded an agreeable variety to the exercise, shouted out, "A pussy!" "A pussy!" some of them repeating the word a great many times.

Juno hushed them after some effort, and then said:—

"Now, children, I am going to write *dog*, and you will see how different it looks from *cat*."

Just as she had got to the last letter of the word "dog," one of the children called out to her:—

"Look around, ma'am, quick! Pompling is getting out of the window!"

Juno looked around, and, true enough, Pompling's head was just disappearing at the window-sill, where he was holding on with his hands. He let go just as Juno looked around, and Juno could hear him sliding down a low shed roof below to the ground. She went to the window, and looked out; but Pompling was nowhere to be seen.

While Juno was looking out at the window, all the children crowded around her to look out, too. "Never mind him," said she, at length. "Let him go. We will attend to our lesson."

"I want to look," said Trip, struggling forward to get his head out. "I see where he went."

"Yes," said Tommy. "I see where he went. He slided down this roof. *I* can go down there. Let me get out, and I'll show you."

So Tommy began at once to climb up upon the window-sill in order to get out of the window. But Juno gently restrained him, and endeavored to call her class back to their duties.

"Then let Trip and I go down, and catch him," said Tommy. "We can catch him, and bring him upstairs to you."

"*You* can't catch him," said Sally.

"I *can!*" said Tommy, speaking in a very emphatic and triumphant tone. "I can run twice as fast as"—

"Hush! children, hush!" said Juno. "Remember this is a Sunday-school. You must all take your seats, and be still and listen to me."

Juno succeeded at last in getting the children into their seats again, but still they kept talking about Pompling's evasion.

"Never mind him," said Juno. "I will let him go. I don't wish to *force* any of my scholars to stay in my school. Only Pompling ought not to have gone in that manner. He ought to have asked me, and to have gone out properly by the door."

Jacob Abbott.

(To be continued.)

NATURAL HISTORY.

FURTHER ACQUAINTANCE WITH FLOWERS.

II.

What varieties of color are found in the petals of flowers! The shapes of the petals also vary: there are the flat, round petals of the rose and buttercup, the tapering petals of the lily, the long-clawed petals of the pink and mustard, the tubular petals of the columbine and honeysuckles, that you must have noticed. Have you ever counted the petals in a flower? I mean in a single flower; for double flowers are made so by cultivation, and none are ever found so when wild. How many petals has a wild rose, a lily, a pansy, a geranium, a morning-glory, a tulip? Pull a spike of the plantain that grows in your back yard. Pick off one tiny flower. How many petals has it?

Flowering plants are divided into two great classes. In the first class we place those plants whose flowers have four or five petals, even if all five are grown together to form one ring or tube, like the honeysuckles and morning-glories: in the second class we place those whose flowers have three or six petals, separate or grown together. Do the rose and the lily belong to the first or the second class?

Hold a rose or geranium leaf up to the light. See the veins in it. The plantain leaf shows its veins more plainly, but in each the veining is all woven into a network: except the middle line and the main veins branching from it, there is only a tangle and snarl of veinlets. We call this net-veining. But look at the leaf of the lily and of the corn. How smoothly these veins run from end to end of the leaf, like the smooth, shining green silk in the growing ear of corn. We call this parallel-veining. The flowers that we placed in the first class all belong to plants that have net-veined leaves; and the flowers that have three or six petals, which we placed in the second class, grow on plants that bear parallel-veined leaves. Some flowers have no petals, and then we can tell by their leaves to which class they belong. The wild clematis that is now starring our roadsides has none; but its sepals are white, and we never miss the absent petals.

You know that a cornstalk is jointed, and full of pith; a grass-stem is jointed, but hollow. If you should cut across the trunk of a cocoanut palm-tree, you would not find such firm, hard wood as in our oaks and cedars, but scattered or clustered threads of wood amid a pithy centre. The palm and all plants having three or six-petaled flowers and parallel-veined leaves are called *endogens*, —*endo*, within, and *gens*, growing,—because the new wood forms in threads scattered amid the pith; but, in the plants that belong to the first class, the wood, when there is any, grows just under the bark, which is a sort of skin. Every year a new ring of wood forms outside of the pith and of the older wood. These plants are called *exogens*,—*exo*, outside, and *gens*, growing,—and their wood is firm and hard. Plants that have no wood we call herbs, and classify them as *exogens* or *endogens* by the number of their petals or by the veining of their leaves. And they can also be classified by the first sprout that they put forth in the spring, if we watch whether the little plant has only one seed leaf or more than one. Do you remember the morning-glory's first pair of leaves, with the notches in the ends? the flabby fat seed leaves of the squashes and melons, and the funny, crooked sprout of the beans when the sturdy seed leaves came up with the old bean-skin atop, like one night-cap for two heads? The pea's seed leaves are so corpulent they cannot get up at all, and send up the next leaves instead. Plants whose seeds have two leaves in them are *exogens*, and are sometimes called *dicotyledonous*—*di*, two, and *cotyledonous*, seed-leaved. A kernel of corn or of wheat will not split like a pea or a bean,

or the meat of a squash seed or of a peach stone. The corn has only one cotyledon or seed leaf. All *endogens* are *monocotyledonous*, —one-seed-leafed.

I wish you would look at a great many plants and trees, and learn, either by flower, leaf, stem, or seed, whether they are *dicotyledonous exogens* or *monocotyledonous endogens*.

Have you thought of any trees that bear flowers? Fruit-trees, of course. Do nuts grow from blossoms on the nut-trees? Have you seen the flowers of the chestnut, the walnut, the beech, the oak? Did you ever see blossoms on a maple or an elm? Are the basswood-trees, or lindens, all out of bloom now? Do you find any clusters of the one-winged seeds of the ash-tree or of the two-winged seeds of the maple?

All flowering plants are called *phænogamous*, or flower-bearing. You can feel very sure about all the field and garden plants whose blossoms claim your attention, that they belong to the first great division called *phænogamous*, or flowering-plants. A few moments' study of any plant will enable you to tell, either by the number of its petals, the veining of its leaves, the character of its stem, or the number of its seed leaves, whether it is an *exogen* or *endogen*. And this is an important question to be correctly answered,—first, when you wish to find out the name and habits of some strange flower, by means of the list of flowers with descriptions that have been carefully prepared by botanists. When you have learned to determine at once whether a plant is an *exogen* or an *endogen*, you can go on tracing out its smaller peculiarities till you have thoroughly made its acquaintance. And *then* you can learn its name.

From Little Unity.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

I.

Numerical Enigma.

I am composed of ten letters, and spell the name of an American poet.

My 4, 2, 8, 5, is a favorite game.
My 10, 6, 7, 1, is a deep hole.
My 5, 6, 3, is a moor.
My 3, 9, 10, is present time.

II.

Concealed Metals.

1. I'm sorry for those people: their only pleasure seems to be in belittling those who are richer than they.

2. We are building a little addition to our house, for we found it too small for us.

3. The horse took a bit in his teeth, and tore down the street, scattering the clouds like dust.

4. There was a big old-fashioned table in the room around which we all sat.

5. I have a sore throat: one tonsil very often troubles me.

III.

Deletions.

Ex. Take strife from to promote, and leave to wade through. *Ans.* For-war-d ford.

1. Take a union of three from a lover of his country, and leave an Irish nickname.

2. Take a blow from colorless, and leave a pronoun.

3. Take relatives from falling, and leave to utter melodious sounds.

4. Take a respectful address from wished for, and leave an act.

5. Take uproar from a burden, and leave to tarry.

St. Nicholas.

IV.

Riddle.

We are seven busy brothers
Laboring every day,
Always helping others
In everything they say.
The first in the Amazon doth dwell,
The second in Egypt has a cell,
The third in Ireland makes his home,
The fourth of us resides in Rome,
The fifth and seventh are in you,
The sixth is everywhere in view.

It is more blessed to give than to receive: it is to be able, through love, to lose yourself in living union with all that has beauty in nature, with all that has nobleness in man, with the whole universe of God, with God himself. Oh, what life shall then be ours,—life which, in losing self, finds itself in union with the ever-beating life which makes, as it beats with love, the whole creation! —*Stopford A. Brooke.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged — not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort — by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,— good citizens of the country,— for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

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